Dylan Thomas: Everybody's Adonais

– Sam Hynes

THE

Commonweal

Congressional Committees

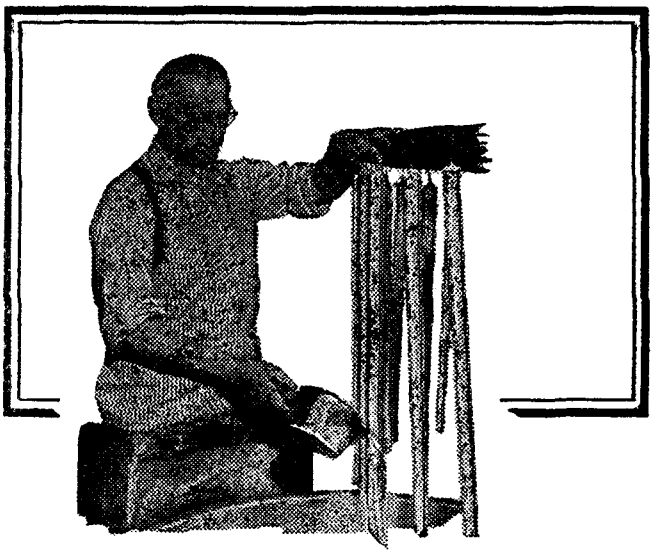
by Jerome G. Kerwin

Strangers from Ireland

by Michael P. Fogarty

Volume LIX, No. 25 March 26, 1954 Twenty Cents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



REVERENT in concept and execution...

Like their fathers and grandfathers before them, master chandlers in the Will & Baumer plant practice the art of candle making as in the days of the guilds.

Patiently and painstakingly they dip Will & Baumer beeswax candles by hand. Each artisan is fully grounded in Rubrical requirements . . . each is proudly conscious that the product of his hands is destined for altars throughout the world.

Modern technology, we firmly believe, can never supplant Will & Baumer's devoted craftsmanship—craftmanship that's reverent in concept and execution.

Will & Baumer
CANDLE CO., INC.
The pioneer Church Candle Manufacturers of America
SYRACUSE • BOSTON • NEW YORK • CHICAGO
MONTREAL • LOS ANGELES

TAPERLITE dinner candles help to make the home the social axis for entertaining and cultured enjoyment. Buy Taperlites in the convenient "Two-Pack", at your leading merchants. A Will & Baumer product.

CANDLE CRAFTSMEN FOR NEARLY A HUNDRED YEARS

THIS WEEK

Week by Week 615

Congressional Committees
by Jerome G. Kerwin 619

Strangers from Ireland
by Michael P. Fogarty 621

A Setback to AFL-CIO Unity
by John C. Cort 623

The Stage
by Richard Hayes 625

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 626

Communications 627

Dylan Thomas: Everybody's Adonais
by Sam Hynes 628

Books 630

THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Editor*
JOHN COGLEY: *Executive Editor*
JAMES O'GARA: *Managing Editor*

Assistant Editors:
WILLIAM P. CLANCY, WILLIAM PFAFF

Associate Editors:
The Labor Movement: JOHN C. CORT
The Screen: PHILIP T. HARTUNG
The Stage: RICHARD HAYES

Contributing Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM, ANNE FREMANTLE

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1954, in the U. S. A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

U. S. and Canada, $7 a year. Foreign, $9. Single copies, 20c.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE

Commonweal

week by week

COLLECTIVE JUDGMENT

THE effectiveness of iron-clad control of information by a totalitarian government tends to have a startling effect on Americans. It is difficult for us to imagine a system where opinion has no free play. And even now, we cannot help but surmise that in many Russian hearts there are strong feelings of dissent.

In a land where free exchange of ideas and political argument are all but second nature, we take criticism of officialdom in stride. High-school boys and girls gravely debate the weightiest issues facing our political leaders. And when these issues are put to the electoral test, the American people continue to voice their various opinions. They accept the verdict of the majority of their compatriots, but they continue to hold and freely to voice their political views.

That is one of the vital elements in our political democracy. At times, however, there is widespread anxiety because of the source of these opinions. Frequently advocates of one side of a public debate have had much greater financial resources than their opponents. Demagogues have flourished for a time even down to our own day. Politicians have become adept in the slickest advertising techniques. The "yellow" press has numbered its adherents by the millions. TV has manifested great potentialities for putting over a candidate or an idea. Here again financial backing is of the essence, imposing its limitations on simon-pure democracy.

There was a time when every political orator believed in his heart that no campaign speech should be without its reference to Lincoln and Washington; the politico felt that he had to "make the eagle scream." Though this type of speech is still not unheard of, there are many candidates and party spokesmen who fear that such apostrophes have worn a little thin. What is aptly referred to as "corn" likewise can prove effective for a time, but American voters are becoming more and more proof to patriotic flourish and phony sentiment.

Even when Presidential elections were for each voter a matter of life and death, and candidates had to take the most virulent and personal abuse, the American electorate maintained a certain degree of sanity. The electorate has made mistakes. It has rectified these and then made other mistakes. But the majority has not tyrannized the minority; the demagogue has not had power thrust into his hands; more often than not the cheap self-seeker has been found out.

DURING wars, depressions and intervals of peace the American people have generally kept their sense of balance. Despite repeated pressures we have never yielded to the greenback solution for painful economic crises. We may have held on too long to the comfortable illusions of isolationism, but most of us have come to recognize the inevitable. General support among Americans for the United Nations, the North Atlantic alliance and the Point Four program cannot be seriously questioned. (The difficulty is that we are too wrapped up in our own concerns to make this support in practice more than half-hearted.)

In fact, in the light of the historical record, it would almost seem that Mr. Lincoln's oft-quoted, ". . . you can't fool all the people all the time," is an understatement. But this is because Americans oppose so vigorously all threats to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Without these freedoms it would not be so.

One of the assumptions on which political democracy is based is that, other things being equal, several heads are better than one. We forego the streamlined efficiencies of the monolithic State for the tug-of-war of the democratic process partly in order that wisdom may prevail. The smartest and best-advised leader is ever prone to error; the errors in judgment of the many will tend to cancel out each other.

As long, then, as the American tradition of civil liberties prevails, there is reason for confidence that neither the demagogue nor the sharp, self-seeking petty politician will prevail here in the United States.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There will undoubtedly be many occasions when this nation fails to rise to its opportunities. But the spurious will never be able to hold sway for any period so long as public issues continue to be freely argued in the light of day.

THE SAME McCARTHY

THERE have always been a certain number of people who held that Senator McCarthy would somehow disappear if only the reporters would not report his doings and the magazines of opinion would refrain from expressing an opinion. For such persons, these past few weeks have been bad ones. Senator McCarthy's battles—with Edward R. Murrow, with CBS and NBC, with the Army, with his fellow-Republican Senator Flanders, with President Eisenhower—have been almost too numerous to catalogue and have captured the headlines, day after day. Whether the "keep-quiet-and-he-will-go-away" theory has anything to it or not will never be known; from the very nature of the case, it is impossible to put it to the test.

For our part, in the face of a situation that is changing as fast as the newspapers can get out a new edition, we would merely like to restate certain basic points about our editorial position on Senator McCarthy. During the last four years, we watched the Senator's power grow week by week. We saw it turned in irresponsible fashion against agencies like the Foreign Service and the Voice of America. We saw that power abused, in instances like the Wechsler affair. We watched as that power was directed first against the Democrats and lately against President Eisenhower and his Republican supporters. Every week, his voice grew a little stronger; every week our allies abroad grew more and more concerned; and every week the clamor of Senator McCarthy was a little more successful in drowning out the voices of reason in his own party and in the Democratic party too.

All this time, the editors of this magazine have opposed Senator McCarthy, beginning when we became convinced of the synthetic nature of his anti-Communist crusade very early in the game. We believed then, as we believe now, that Senator McCarthy does vastly more harm than good. His approach, his methods and his attitude do violence to the spirit of democracy in which we believe. We do not believe that "you have to fight fire with fire"; as far as we can see, the character of the McCarthy crusade is such that it would in the end corrupt the cause for which the Western world is fighting. The threat of Communism is a real one, but Senator McCarthy has shown himself incapable of grasping its true dimensions. Rather than an honest and intelligent attempt to deal with the actual threat of subversion, the McCarthy crusade has always struck us as an essentially know-nothing attempt to gain personal power by playing on the very real fears of his fellow-citizens. As an anti-Communist, Senator McCarthy has been the worst kind of failure, producing headline after headline, sensation after sensation, and precious little else.

All in all, we consider the case against Senator McCarthy to be a damning one, and it would be a source of satisfaction to us if more and more Americans began to see his crusade for the shabby thing it is—though it would be ironic if Senator McCarthy finally went down because people grew bored with him rather than on a matter of principle. Yet it is much too early for those who are opposed to Senator McCarthy's power to rejoice. Instead, responsible citizens and legislators should make quite clear their support of President Eisenhower in his Administration's showdown with the irresponsible Senator from Wisconsin. For our part, the events of the past few weeks have served only to confirm our belief that Senator McCarthy contributes nothing to the cause of intelligent anti-Communism or democracy.

NEXT WEEK

MARSHALL MCLUHAN discusses cultural and other aspects of present-day communication.

"From the point of view of its format the press as a daily cross-section of the globe is a mirror of the technological instruments of communication. It is the popular daily book, the great collective poem, the universal entertainment of our age. As such it has modified poetic techniques and in turn has already been modified by the newer media of movie, radio and TV. These represent revolutions in communication as radical as printing itself. . . . If Erasmus was the first to size up and exploit the printing press as a new force in art and education, James Joyce was the first to seize upon newspaper, radio, movie and TV to set up his 'verbivocovisual' drama in *Finnegans Wake*. Pound and Eliot are, in comparison with Joyce, timid devotees of the book as art form. . . ."

RACE AND UNIONS

MANY things went into Taft-Hartley which should never have got there, and some good things were ignored. One good idea which the legislators omitted at the time was a provision barring

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

racially restrictive practices in unions. Happily, the House Labor Committee has now passed an amendment on this subject, and from the almost unanimous vote in Committee, the measure appears to have a very good chance when it reaches the floor of the House.

Sponsored by Rep. Adam Clayton Powell of New York, the amendment would prohibit unions from denying membership to anyone because of race, creed, or national origin by making such discrimination an "unfair labor practice" under the labor-management law. If passed, the amendment would force locals now practicing segregation to give equal status and opportunity to all qualified workers. Thus this move might well mark the beginning of the end for racial practices which in certain unions have long been a blot on the record of American labor.

MR. NIXON AND THE "NEW LOOK"

THE Republican Administration's approach to the American public has too often been characterized by the use of slogans, the reduction of ideas to catch-phrases, and what appears to be a contemptuously low evaluation of the intelligence of the people. Mr. Dulles' talks on foreign policy have had a labored folksiness to them; Vice President Nixon's March 13 reply to Adlai Stevenson was distinguished by low-key demagoguery (that is a strong word, but in this case a very accurate one).

Mr. Stevenson asked some very serious questions about the "New Look" in military policy. The questions were not idle. Members of Congress and political commentators have posed them; Mr. Christopher Emmet developed them in these pages a few weeks ago.

Mr. Stevenson asked for "searching, responsible, discussion." This new policy, if it is a new policy and not a political merchandising scheme, was developed without bi-partisan consultation or public discussion. As titular leader of the opposition, Mr. Stevenson has a right to ask for an accounting to the public.

He asked, specifically, what would happen if we were faced by small-scale aggression. (Suppose, for example, Afghanistan were invaded as was Tibet.) Do we atom-bomb Peiping or Moscow? "What if we are confronted with something less than a clear case of overt aggression" such as the Greek civil war or the Berlin Blockade? Would we be able to reply as we have done in the past; or would we atom-bomb Peiping or Moscow?

Mr. Nixon's reply lacked frankness, substituting for it a recommendation of unlimited confidence in our "leader," who is even "known and respected and loved in countries on this earth which he has never visited," who is "one of the greatest military leaders in the world today."

The Vice President asked of Mr. Stevenson, "Does he think the Korean war should not have been stopped?"; "Does he think that the Soviet Union should not be held responsible when they commit aggression against a free nation by using one of their satellites?" We think it fair to assume that the critics of the Administration's "New Look" are pleased that the Korean War is ended (the talk of betrayal in Korea, and of 'craven appeasement' there has not been coming from Mr. Eisenhower's left). We think it reasonable to assume that the critics have no illusions about the relation between satellites and the Soviet Union. Mr. Nixon's ingenuous questions have little to do with the real issue.

The issue is whether this new policy is to be openly discussed, or whether we ordinary citizens ("I'm not a military strategist" said Mr. Nixon, and "I don't imagine that many of you . . . are military experts either") are passively to hand over our confidence and public responsibilities to our "leader."

This magazine has profound respect for Mr. Eisenhower's accomplishments and experience as an Army officer. We feel, however, that we would prefer to place our confidence in him on a basis of candor, mutual respect, and democratic discussion, than to hand it over blindly. We suspect that Mr. Eisenhower, were he able to be located behind the phalanx of advertising men and merchandising experts, would agree with us.

Fortunately, it begins to appear that the "New Look" may be only a fancy new wrapping for substantially the same military policy we have had since the beginning of the Korean war. (And if the "change" is a political gimmick, it is easier to understand Mr. Nixon's unwillingness to analyze it.) Admiral Radford and some other representatives of the Defense Department have stated the case for the "New Look" in more realistic terms. The Admiral said on March 11 that "we intend to maintain that we are not relying solely on one weapon or one service."

It would appear that the "New Look" actually is a case of economizing on the armed forces, without radically changing their missions, coupled with an effort to throw a scare into the Russian and Chinese leaders. It is too bad that Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dulles have been unwilling to talk about it on those terms, rather than using it as a slogan in their rather condescending addresses to the American people.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MURROW SHOW

THIS is probably going to be a minority report on the Edward R. Murrow program dealing with the career of Senator McCarthy. Mr. Murrow, in my opinion, has long been one of the most responsible commentators in the business and is surrounded by a staff of extremely competent newsmen. I admire his courage in taking on the Wisconsin bully. There may well be very salutary results from the opportunity he gave his viewers to see McCarthy in action. In a word, I am greatly tempted to go along with the uncritical approval which Mr. Murrow has received for the historic telecast. But I also think that with that program Murrow set a bad precedent, and now is the time to say so. If the "See It Now" experiment gets by without comment on its potential danger, it will be that much more difficult to point out its hazards later when it is being used by demagogic commentators.

In such a program as Murrow's, selectivity is inevitable. Mr. Murrow was illustrating a thesis the night of the McCarthy program and did so by the use of selected film clips. Selectivity on such a program is not only inevitable, it *is* the program. Certain other commentators might make a totally different selection of film which would turn Senator McCarthy into a man on a shining white steed—infinitely reasonable, burdened with the onus of singlehandedly cleaning out subversives in the face of violent criticism, wholly without self-interest and sincerely devoted to the success of the Eisenhower Administration. I believe film footage could be found to suggest all these noble attributes. Instead of the McCarthy with the chilling giggle, we could be shown shots of the shy bridegroom surrounded by admiring friends, the friendly political opponent who debated Congressman Eugene McCarthy on television and consistently called him "Gene" as if they were bosom buddies disagreeing over some abstruse point. We could have had the playful McCarthy who threw his arm around Senator Flanders after the Vermont Republican lambasted him, and the courteous McCarthy who once found himself in an elevator with Dean Acheson.

Television is dynamite. Combined with selectivity, it could explode in any person's or any group's face. The first time I saw someone do a job on a political figure was during the recent Presidential campaign. Then it was Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce illustrating by the use of carefully chosen newsreel shots why we should throw the rascals out. The impact of the program was devastating, but there was a saving factor in that it was clearly marked as a one-sided political telecast; the time for it was purchased by the Republican party; and Mrs. Luce was frankly a partisan.

Mr. Murrow offered Senator McCarthy an equal amount of time to defend himself, of course. But how was McCarthy to do this? By a spoken rebuttal? I don't think those odds are quite fair. On the one hand, Mr. Murrow had all the know-how and resources of one of our great networks to set up his case; and on the other, there was an individual Senator with nothing to call on but his own speech and whatever film he might lay his hands on. Of its nature such a contest would be unequal, and if Senator McCarthy didn't suffer from his particular obsession, he would have made that point and not relied on his fantastic linking of Ed Murrow with the Kremlin.

I have no reason to charge Mr. Murrow of all people with a deliberate act of irresponsibility, and it is surely ironical that McCarthy of all people should be the victim of what I consider an unfair practice. Everyone who knows Murrow speaks respectfully of his sincerity in serving the nation's best interest as an executive of Columbia. Doubtlessly, he felt that there was something very big at stake or he would not have ventured into the business of attacking a political figure on his program. Realizing the immensity and the uniqueness of the McCarthy problem, one is almost inclined to go along. But I think that the circumstances surrounding the broadcast made all the difference—the fact that it relied on pictures and not on a spoken text which could be clearly answered, the fact that it was commercially sponsored, the fact that it was a one-man show and that those who disagreed with Murrow's evaluation of McCarthy had no hand in the selection of the clips to be shown.

During the Presidential campaign, Adlai Stevenson spoke bitterly of the "one-party press" in the United States and thereby suggested one of our thorny national problems. When the channels of communication are controlled by private corporations, these corporations are necessarily big. Since they are big, their personal interests are the interests of similar giants. When they use their resources not only to feed information to the people but to influence the people's thinking in their direction, it is an almost inevitable turn. Practically no mass publication medium has avoided succumbing to the obvious temptation. The "one-party press" is not such a mystery; the real wonder is that the press is as disinterested as it is. But so far, speaking generally, we have escaped the use of network resources for private interests. Both CBS and NBC have earnestly tried to present both sides fairly. I am sorry to say that I truly believe the Edward R. Murrow show has set a potentially dangerous precedent which those who are now applauding it may find good reason to regret in time to come.

JOHN COGLEY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Congressional Committees

THE STEVENS-McCARTHY AFFAIR POINTS UP THE RECURRING TENSIONS BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE HILL

JEROME G. KERWIN

THE Stevens-McCarthy affair may be viewed from any one or a combination of four angles. First, as another of those fantastic episodes in which the Senator from Wisconsin plays the role of sleuth, policeman, prosecuting attorney, judge, jury, and court of last resort. Secondly, it is a problem involving the operation of legislative investigating committees: their purpose and the manner of their functioning. Thirdly, in this latest of governmental explosions there is an important issue in the field of civil-military relations. Fourthly, it is yet another crisis in executive-legislative relations, growing out of the very nature of the American governmental structure.

We need not dwell on the first aspect (Senator McCarthy may demand equal space for an answer) except to repeat what has been said by many good American citizens: the damage to U.S. prestige abroad and to unity and morale at home caused by this mad pursuit of subversives may by this time be irreparable. When one man is able to intimidate both governors and governed, the time has certainly arrived for the Chief Executive forcefully to meet this challenge to the common good of the country and the peace of the world.

Congressional investigating committees have been in operation since the early days of the Republic; as far back as 1792 the House of Representatives investigated the tragic failure of the St. Clair expedition against the Indians. Standing committees have been developed as a time-saving device to aid in the careful consideration of proposed legislation. Committees have grown in size and number with the growth in size of the Congress and with the increase in quantity and complexity of legislation. While they exist primarily for the purpose of examining proposed legislation, it is unquestionable that they may also investigate such conditions throughout the country as may call for legislation. If one bears this in mind, it is readily seen that almost any matter from the rising cost of pins to military catastrophe may be investigated by a Congressional committee. Any social problem may give rise to a need for new laws. The number of committee investigations in the absence of proposed legislation has increased in the last fifty years with the increase in economic and social issues.

The Congressional committees also provide a necessary link between the executive and legislative branches, for, unlike the parliamentary system, where the executive officers of state sit as members of the legislature and interrogation takes place as part of the ordinary proceedings, our system promotes in the legislators a sense of isolation from the administration. The investigating committee provides the legislators with their only opportunity for formal interrogation of department heads and bureau chiefs.

Loyalty investigations have attained prominence since the first World War, particularly since the setting up of the Dies Committee in 1938. In 1945 this committee for the investigation of un-American activities was made a permanent committee of the House of Representatives. Since the creation of this committee and others like it, serious students of law and government have been greatly disturbed by the emotionalism that has often characterized the proceedings, and have felt that when grave matters such as treason, sabotage, or conspiracy are involved, the temptation to the superpatriot and the ambitious politicians to forget the fundamental protection offered all citizens should in some way be curbed. The existence, however, of enough truth in what the investigators have turned up has made the adoption of a set standard of fair practice almost impossible.

Suggestions for the reform of legislative loyalty-investigations have came from such people as Representatives Javits of New York and Freylinghuysen of New Jersey, as well as from Senator Kefauver. To avoid the shameful competition for publicity among subversive-activities committees, recently so evident, it has been proposed that all investigations into subversive activities be handled by one joint committee of the Senate and the House. In addition, it has been suggested that certain rules protective of the citizen's rights be observed. (As a matter of fact, for many years political scientists have been recommending that most legislative committees be made joint committees in order to prevent the senseless duplication of work and hearings that goes on under the present system.)

Mr. Kerwin is director of the Walgreen Foundation and Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHANGES in composition and procedure of these committees are imperative. When all is said and done, however, the behavior of a committee will largely depend upon the character of its chairman. If he is a person with a sense of justice, no one will have reason to complain. Loyalty committees have not been the only offenders: for many years ordinary citizens have felt, after appearing before some Congressional committees, as if they have been through a process of brainwashing. So grueling has the process been that large pressure groups have found it necessary to employ lobbyists tough of hide and wise in the ways of legislative procedure to represent them before committees.

The relations between the civil and military establishments involved in the Stevens case merit some attention. In a country where a sound tradition of law and custom provides for the subordination of the military to the civil arm (subordination does not mean slavish submission) military officials must be ready to respond to executive commands and legislative requests. Civilian branches of the government have often complained that as far as the budget is concerned the armed forces get from Congress whatever they want, but this is true only in part. During the progress of a war no legislator wants to risk questioning the expressed needs of the military experts; wars must be won, no matter what the material cost may be. During time of peace, however, the leaders of the military establishment must operate through unpredictable periods of retrenchment and expansion, when the civilian arm leaves no doubt as to its superiority.

Until recently, however, the officers and men of the armed services have enjoyed the respect and consideration of the legislators. Despite the political passions aroused at the time of General MacArthur's dismissal from his command in the Far East, the committee hearings at which he appeared were conducted with commendable dignity. Until now there has been no case on record of an attempt by a committee or its chairman to bully any officer or to discredit the armed services as such.

The Stevens case points up a more complex problem: the relation between the executive and legislative branches of the government. The Constitution provides for three branches of government, theoretically independent of one another yet related sufficiently so that one branch serves as a check upon the others. By this system a balance is supposed to be maintained, but except for brief honeymoon periods we are seldom aware of the balance in operation. If the President assumes firm leadership, he is a "dictator" in the eyes of the legislators; if the Congress assumes the leadership, the country cries out for responsible direction in national affairs. The unfortunate and unavoidable fact is that the Congress cannot lead and whenever it does the national government is torn apart by faction and strife. In the difficult days in which we live prompt decisions are called for and unity of command is essential; the executive must use the legal and customary powers at his command to prevent chaos in the immense operations of government. The issues of our time are too critical to permit of leisurely debate, inter-party factionalism, and personal feuds.

Under a system of strict party responsibility President Eisenhower, with his party in control of both houses of the Congress, would be able to announce to the country and the world a program and a policy with fair assurance that the Congress will go along with him. He is in no different situation, however, from that of many Presidents before him: he proposes and Congress disposes. Considering the separation of powers in our government, the most we can advocate is a stronger party discipline, which, among other things, would call for a strong hand at the executive helm and abolition of the seniority rule in selecting chairmen of

Congressional committees. On the vehicle of the seniority rule both friend and foe of the Administration ride to the head of important committees.

THE national government is better organized from the point of view of administration than many of the states. The President is head and director of the huge administrative staff; the department heads and bureau chiefs are answerable to him. It is essential to the smooth operation of the system that this be the case. This is not to say that the Congress should not known how the funds it has appropriated are being spent and how its wishes as expressed in laws are being carried out. By constant Congressional meddling, however, proper administration becomes impossible.

The President and the administrative chiefs under him should speak for the Administration. When the heads of departments and bureaus are by-passed and their subordinates called before Congressional committees, there to be badgered and browbeaten for carrying out the orders of their superiors, the result is chaos.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If the superior does not at such a time rise up in defense of his subordinates, he loses the confidence and loyalty of his whole staff. Presidents have for years realized the dire results of excessive Congressional interference, and though their efforts to protect the executive domain from legislative encroachment have caused many sharp battles with the Congress, they have been guarding a very important principle of public administration. At one time the Congress threatened all manner of reprisal against Theodore Roosevelt for his refusal to allow his Secretary of the Treasury to appear before a Congressional committee. The battle is fought each time a strong executive holds the presidential office.

The morale of a department can be completely broken down, as at present with the Department of State, by the assaults of one Congressional committee. The recruitment of first-rate personnel becomes well-nigh impossible. The present decline in the number of college-trained applicants for examination as junior management assistants reflects in part the low state to which government service has fallen. From twenty thousand applicants in 1950 the number fell to eight thousand in 1953.

When a form of espionage in behalf of one Senate committee seems to operate in every department of government, the feeling of insecurity and suspicion that naturally results destroys almost every shred of initiative and efficiency. The Congress has every right to observe closely the operation of the executive departments, but when observation becomes nothing more than vindictive harassment, the President must defend in emphatic terms the independence of the executive. He may even go so far as to forbid all federal employees under his command to appear before Congressional committees until adequate assurance of their proper treatment has been given. And all good citizens should support him. This is a matter far more important than the unity of a political party. It is a question of the protection of our whole constitutional system, which the President is sworn to safeguard.

No code of laws can guarantee the proper behavior of Congressional committees or define the proper degree of subordination of the military to civilian control or draw a strict line of separation between executive and legislative authority. Jurisdictional disputes are inevitable from time to time. We must of necessity live under a government of men, as well as of laws. Much therefore depends on the character of the men. Beyond observance of the written law, the successful function of the American government demands of its public servants the respect for our traditions and institutions that sound statesmanship inspires, the spirit of restraint and fair play that political maturity and good judgment require, and the sincere patriotism that is born of profound devotion to the common good, patriotism whose seat is the heart and mind, not the tongue.

FROM BRITAIN

Strangers From Ireland

Birmingham

THE Catholic population of Birmingham (England, not Alabama) has gone up sixty-five per cent since the war. Most of the newcomers are Irish, and Birmingham's Irish-born population is now reckoned at fifty thousand. What happens to the young Irishman—or Irish girl—who comes to Birmingham to work?

They will be lucky, first of all, if their lodgings are comfortable or cheap. The few hostels and boarding houses sponsored by Catholic agencies fall far short of the demand. For the rest, an Irishman will often be turned away from the better lodgings. His countrymen are not popular with landladies. He may sleep for a time in a common lodging house, if not in the station or in an abandoned air raid shelter. In a bad case he may find himself one of eighteen young men sharing six beds, and paying 50/- a week each for the privilege. Or he may be in one of five beds, where Irish men on night-shift sleep in the day, and Irish girls at night. But the general story of tumble-down housing, broken furniture, inadequate sheets and blankets, is quite gloomy enough without bringing in the extremes. The food supplied by landladies is often poor, and many immigrants prefer to buy and cook their own. Others live largely on tea and buns from the city's snack bars, spending a further tidy amount of time in the pubs.

Jobs may be of almost any kind. For men, there are particularly jobs in the big motor and cycle plants, or as construction laborers. Girls go largely to the bus service (as "clippies") or to light engineering. Some men and girls join their unions, and the related Catholic organizations. They provide, for instance, a good share of the membership of the Catholic Transport Guild and Nurses' Guild. But in general they do not join unions, nor indeed anything much else. For one who builds up a new set of connections through parish clubs and dances, Irish societies, or sports clubs (there is a fair amount of Irish sport in Birmingham), there are probably several who join nothing, and get their recreation on the street corner.

And the consequences of this way of life? Sometimes they are rather paradoxical. One firm had one hundred per cent union membership. Irish workers came in and refused to join, because, they said, the union was Communist-run. English workers began to drop out. Why, they felt, should they pay contributions when the Irish

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were enjoying the same rates and conditions as themselves without cost? The union percentage dropped; and presently it dropped so low that the Communist minority was able for the first time to get control.

But usually the consequences are more straightforward. Irishmen supply more than their share of Birmingham's TB cases. A priest comments that ninety per cent of the gastric ulcer cases in a hospital he visits are Irish; not so surprising, seeing the way that many Irish have to live and eat. In a typical weekend, sixty-one out of one hundred and three drunks in the Birmingham courts were Irish. There is trouble among girls working on the buses; broken hours and bad accommodation cause too many temptations. More than a few married men have come over in all good faith to earn money for the family—and it is astonishing what many manage to send home—but have ended up living with another woman. Plenty of Irish men and girls keep up their religious practice, often in an exemplary way. But many do not. Figures of practicing Catholics as low as eight to ten per cent of the Irishmen in a particular boarding house (it is significant that the house is the unit) are not unknown.

DO not blame Birmingham too much. It is, for its own citizens, a very well governed city. If its Councillors and MP's look after the voters first, any other politician who reads this is welcome to throw the first stone. The fact is that there is a vicious circle from which all concerned find it hard to escape. Thrown into bad conditions, sink or swim, many Irish swim, but some sink. Having sunk, they drag down the reputation of the rest.

This problem is not unique to Birmingham, or the Irish. Ten per cent of the people of England and Wales change local government district each year. They generally move to better jobs and accommodations than the Irish. But the "social poverty," the loneliness of settling in, may be just as great, especially in the bleak "bureaucratic environment," as some English sociologists are beginning to call it, of the big new municipal estates. And there are sections of the people worse off even than the Irish. Notably the colored immigrants from the West Indies and Africa, of whom there are eight thousand in Birmingham alone.

The answer, in Birmingham, is beginning to be found by the initiative of the Young Christian Workers. Three years ago, on the invitation of the Archbishop, the YCW sent in an organizer. He made a full survey of the problem, with the help of various civic and Catholic bodies. On the basis of this a YCW section did pioneer work, finding out where immigrants were lodging, helping them to find work and lodgings and make social contacts, and meeting them off the Irish trains as they arrived. They succeeded almost too well. Immediately their work was known, they were deluged with requests for help far beyond their power to meet.

The preliminary work showed that this was an Anglo-Irish problem, which could not be solved on this side of the Irish Sea alone. The immigrants were Irish, of Irish culture. True, comparatively few of them were likely to go back to Ireland. What was to happen to their children and grandchildren—assimilation or Irish culture—was a question which Americans may be better able to answer than we are in Britain. But for the first generation the immigrants' culture must be Irish or nothing. It began to seem reasonable to ask for co-operation from Ireland in meeting their needs.

But what were these measures to be? More hostels and parish dance halls, or Gaelic sports clubs? Certainly. But not, said the YCW, as the first priority. The salvation of the Irish immigrants, in Birmingham or elsewhere, is a matter for the Irish immigrants before anyone else. That is where the vicious circle can be broken.

So the idea grew of an Irish center in Birmingham, with a full-time welfare worker, a typist, and a committee of volunteer workers representing Irish and Catholic groups. It would help immigrants in their contact with jobs, housing, parishes, and sports and other—especially Irish—organizations. It would be a medium not merely for assimilating Irish men and women into the life of Birmingham, but for preserving and building up their Irish culture. Above all, it would be a point of contact from and around which the lay apostolate could develop. It would be run and financed, once it was in full operation, by the Birmingham Irish themselves. But the initial capital, for premises, equipment, and the first year or two's salaries, would come it was hoped at least partly from Ireland.

A petition in favor of the center was signed by twenty thousand Birmingham Irish, the YCW doing the work of seeking them out and collecting their signatures. Early in December it was presented to the Archbishop in Dublin and to leaders of the various parties; strong support was expressed. Now there remains necessary only the final and decisive step.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Setback to AFL-CIO Unity

THE decision of the executive board of the AFL Teamsters' Union (alias Dave Beck) not to sign the no-raiding pact between the AFL and CIO hit the wobbly hope of labor unity like a torpedo exploding squarely amidships.

The background was as follows:

Last fall, conventions of both the AFL and CIO approved an agreement that their unions would not try to seduce members away from rival unions in the other federation. If disputes existed, these would be referred to arbitration by some impartial outsider. The agreement, however, was only binding on those international unions which approved it.

The pact was greeted everywhere as a hopeful first step toward a full-scale amalgamation of the two organizations.

The CIO soon announced that all of its major unions, having, I believe, ninety-eight per cent of its total membership, had signed the no-raiding pact. President Walter Reuther announced, however, to AFL President George Meany that these signatures would be held until the major unions of the Federation had also signed.

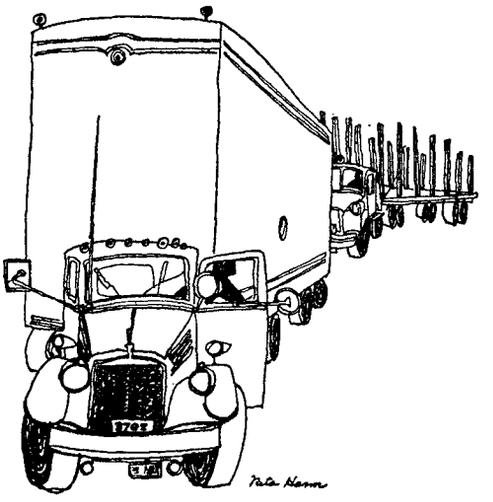
Meany told Reuther that he believed most of the AFL unions would sign. Certainly Meany himself did everything that he could to persuade them to do so. He persuaded forty-one out of one hundred and eleven international unions. Most of the others were waiting to see what Beck's Teamsters would do.

Now they know. Beck called the no-raiding pact "a Korean peace that covers up problems but does not solve them." In the same breath he said the Teamsters were "one hundred per cent opposed to raiding." The solution was clear and simple. All that was necessary was for various AFL and CIO unions to return to the Teamsters fifty thousand drivers and warehousemen who belonged to his union and Beck would give each union an individual safe conduct. He said nothing, however, about returning to their rightful unions the thousands of workers, including shop girls and farm hands, who have been organized by the Teamsters despite the fact that they have no jurisdiction over them.

Earlier Beck had made public a thirty-page case book including six hundred and fifteen complaints of violations of Teamster jurisdiction by other unions. Of these, ninety involved the United Mine Workers, an independent extension of the personality of John L. Lewis, two hundred and fifty violations were laid at the door of fellow AFL unions, and two hundred and seventy-five credited to the CIO.

What happens is this: say a CIO union like the Rubber Workers organizes a plant that has a few drivers and a dozen warehousemen. Beck says these men belong in the Teamsters. The claim, of course, is so much nonsense, because if that principle were to be followed then most of the CIO unions would have to be cut into a dozen small pieces for the nourishment of appropriate AFL craft unions.

The same thing has happened as between the Teamsters and other AFL unions. But this is a separate problem entirely, and it does no credit to Beck's sincerity that he mixes up the two. He has not said how many CIO workers he covets, but from the above figures it is doubtful if it is more than twenty-five thousand. The Teamsters presently claim a membership of one million, three hundred thousand. In order to make



a maximum net gain in membership of less than two per cent Dave Beck has torpedoed any immediate hope of unity for close to fifteen million American workers.

The whole problem of jurisdiction is one which should be left to arbitration machinery. The CIO has already done so. George Meany is trying to work out something similar for the AFL, but it is evident that Beck will pay this idea no more mind than he gave the AFL-CIO peace treaty.

Fortunately, Meany and Reuther have shown that they are both sincerely devoted to the dream of labor unity. And Meany is a strong and determined man who may yet be able to tame the AFL's new *enfant terrible,* as he tamed that other terrible infant, John L. Lewis, at the AFL convention of 1947.

Of course the price of Lewis's taming was the withdrawal, again, of the Miners from the AFL. Disaffiliation would be a tough price to pay for the taming of Dave Beck. But it is significant that Beck is already dropping hints of pulling out unless he gets his way in a current rhubarb with the Railway Clerks, AFL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nobody is going to quarrel with the proposition that Beck is a formidable man. He not only has behind him the largest union in the AFL, second only in the country to the United Auto Workers, but a union second to none in economic strength and enjoying a treasury of more than thirty-one million dollars.

BECK himself is a big-time operator who is variously estimated to be either a millionaire or a multi-millionaire. (See "Businessman Beck" in the *Wall Street Journal* for February 9, 1954.) He is board chairman of two sizable enterprises, an auto finance and insurance company, and an eighteen-story apartment house. He and his family have heavy investments in filling stations, parking lots, real estate, beer, and beer distribution. From the Teamsters he receives a salary of fifty thousand dollars plus expenses, so it is obvious that Beck is not exactly starving.

Since many of his business enterprises employ members of the Teamsters Union, it is also obvious that there exists here a problem of divided loyalties. A similar problem arises when one considers the personal loan of more than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars given to Beck by Occidental Life Insurance Company (at three and a half per cent interest, a lovely rate), this company being the selfsame outfit that handles seventy-five per cent of the health and welfare insurance for Teamster members on the West Coast.

Beck has shown commendable vigor in moving in on some of his really corrupt locals in New York, Detroit, Kansas City, etc. He is battling the mobsters on the New York waterfront, while at the same time saying nice things about John L. Lewis, who is engaged in a shameless effort to keep the mobsters in good fighting trim. You figure that one out. I can't. Unless it be that a terrible infant just can't resist another terrible infant.

Walter Reuther happened to be in town the other night and I asked him if he thought there was any hope left for AFL-CIO unity after what Beck had done. He showed praiseworthy restraint in talking about it. The worst he would say was, "Well, it doesn't help."

"We in the CIO still believe in labor unity," he added. "And we believe the no-raiding pact is a necessary step toward unity. Our house is in order. Now it's up to the AFL to put its house in order."

Luckily, George Meany has proven himself one of the labor movement's more capable housekeepers. Perhaps all is not yet lost.

DECLINE OF A COLUMNIST

SOMEBODY should do a piece sometime on "The Decline and Fall of Victor Riesel." Riesel used to be a labor columnist who wrote for the New York *Post*. Then some years ago he moved over to the *Mirror*, a Hearst publication. He was already syndicating his column nationally, and from this point on his copy became more and more sensational.

His column in the *Mirror* for February 26 is maybe a little worse than typical. It starts off: "The CIO is going bankrupt. With its income slashed at the rate of $1,000,000 a year because of unemployment, it is about to lose another $1,250,000 annually." He concludes that "the odds are that CIO may not survive the year."

The basis for these statements is Riesel's belief that (1) a million CIO members are unemployed, (2) the Steelworkers are about to stop paying per capita to the CIO because of President McDonald's dislike for Walter Reuther, and (3) a number of smaller CIO unions are all set to pull out to affiliate with various AFL and independent unions.

None of these items is true. The CIO has been hit by unemployment, just as the AFL and other American unions have been, but the correct figure is closer to four hundred thousand. I asked Walter Reuther about the present financial condition of the CIO and he replied, "Last year was the best year in the CIO's history."

I talked with a member of the international executive board of the Steelworkers Union about the question of not paying per capita and he replied, "The Steelworkers don't operate that way. The last meeting of the board didn't even mention the subject, and no one would have authority to withhold our per capita tax unless the board approved it."

Not entirely satisfied with this, I got on the long-distance phone. I can say that "an unimpeachable authority" has informed me as follows: "The United Steelworkers are paid up in their per capita to CIO and they intend to stay paid up. Riesel is wrong."

(Incidentally, Riesel has made another mistake in this column in figuring CIO per capita as one dollar per member per year. It is actually one dollar and twenty cents.)

Riesel cited no evidence to prove that the CIO Oil Workers, Packinghouse Workers, Utility Workers and Maritime Union are "prepared," "set," or "have virtually clinched pacts" to pull out of the CIO. What evidence I have indicates that none of them is close to being prepared, set or clinched, and several are exactly the opposite.

It is my sober opinion that Riesel, once a pro-labor journalist, has now become a more destructive influence than Westbrook Pegler. Pegler is so blatantly hostile that no reasonable man can take him very seriously. But Riesel's appearance of fairmindedness might deceive the unwary into falling for his current campaign to frighten the CIO into an early grave.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fortunately, the CIO is not so easily frightened.

And right here I want to pay a tribute to Walter Reuther, whom Riesel once so lavishly praised and now just as lavishly disparages. Reuther recently spoke in Boston to a packed meeting, and answered questions brilliantly for an hour after the talk. Later I had the good luck to meet him and talk to him for about half an hour. I was deeply impressed by the man, not only by his speech-making abilities, which are well-established, but by his personal qualities. He is a more gentle, human, humorous man than I had imagined. His courage, honesty, and devotion to the workers whom he represents is well above average, in my opinion.

Riesel says, "McDonald believes Reuther is building a Socialist labor movement in the image of the British Labor Party." (I myself gravely doubt if McDonald really believes that.) I was impressed with Reuther's conservatism. These are some things he said publicly:

"I believe we can prove the Communists are wrong when they say free enterprise cannot solve the problems of poverty and unemployment. . . . I personally believe in a free enterprise system. . . . I don't believe nationalization of industry is a miracle that will overcome all our problems. . . . I have unlimited faith in a free people, and that even includes management. . . . If industry meets its responsibilities, I am opposed to government interference. . . . European Socialists have been hypnotized by slogans. . . . We in America are less concerned with who owns the oven and more concerned with the size of the pie and our slice of the pie. . . . Man does not live by bread alone." Hardly spoken like a Socialist. He also expressed opposition to a third party.

Afterwards, when I mentioned Riesel's cracks about McDonald, Reuther expressed disbelief and refused to be drawn into any criticism of the Steelworkers' president. He did say this about Riesel's report that McDonald is complaining that "Reuther is setting major labor policy as head of CIO."

"CIO policy," he said, "is set by the convention, on recommendations from the resolutions committee. Who was chairman of the resolutions committee? Dave McDonald."

There is apparently some ill feeling on the part of McDonald toward Reuther. Men of more intimate knowledge than I agree that it is not by any means serious enough to threaten a real split in the CIO. But it is there. They are both good men, and perhaps if columnists would stop provoking the feud, some peacemaker could get the two together.

As the psalmist said once, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Now if some other peacemaker could get Riesel and me together. . . .

JOHN C. CORT.

THE STAGE

THE BURNING GLASS

MR. Charles Morgan's characters inhabit a world of antiseptic good breeding, pure living and clean thinking. No disreputable sentiments find a haven in their hearts; never do selfish, irresponsible or trivial impulses govern their actions. They toil not, nor do they spin: indelicate references to money in these drawing rooms would have the force of social obscenity. They have their gentle formalities ("If the PM is coming, I had better put on my dinner jacket," the hero observes at one point) but also their endearing humanities: a game of chess before bed, a stroll round the garden. They never lack for the literary allusion—the Shakespearean aphorism, the Biblical injunction—nor are they above turning a bit of a (rather limping) epigram themselves. But what gives them a special distinction is their cosy intimacy with the Spiritual Realities: Love, Loyalty, Faith. (These words are always pronounced in capitals.) So formidable, indeed, are their concerns, that when Mr. Morgan's hero is explaining his discovery of a method by which solar energies may be harnessed, his modest wife is quite capable of announcing with domestic aplomb: "This is between us and the world."

Mr. Morgan has given his protagonist a wife, but the true heroine of "The Burning Glass"—the ruler of the roost—is that irrefutable mistress of the moral universe, Mother (sometimes known as Mummy, or Mums). With her tea gowns, her flowers, her embroidery hour by the fire, she is as warm and familiar as a buttered scone. Is Mums troubled by these tangled scientific dilemmas, these dazzling excursions into the ionosphere which may control the fate of man? Not a bit of it! Mums has her own code, she does: " 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.' It's as simple as that." But it isn't really—even for Mums—and she finally rings up the Prime Minister and invites him over to hear all about the burning glass. (Her connections, of course, are of the very best: she calls the PM "Monty," and they had once gone punting at Oxford.)

A very toney debate ensues in which the responsibilities of science vis-a-vis a corrupt world are solemnly defined. But Mums has her intuitions, and she is sure there is something sinister out on that green and pleasant lawn. And right she is! For when Monty has been dispatched, and Mums is settling down to her embroidery, it enters through the French windows: a sleazy continental type secretly in the service of "the enemy." He needs, you see, a bit of help with his motor, and Mr. Morgan's hero—being a public school man—can hardly refuse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But this is once when Mums' intuition has failed her. The scientist is abducted; then returned. But what of the burning glass? The world rocks inwardly, communications pass furiously between the PM and the American President (the latter promises his support in case of war, but notes prophetically that Congress may prove a trifle difficult). Even Mums shows signs of dismay, but not for long: she finally brings the world to heel, banishes these visions of apocalyptic destruction, and returns gratefully to arranging flowers on the piano.

It is no use telling Mr. Morgan (and Mums) that this simply will not do: that one or two arresting ideas cannot sustain so frumpy and pedestrian a drama: that to embellish and encase major crises of conscience with such dusty dramatic observation is merely to vulgarize them. Each of his characters withers in this airless drawing room, and so, I might add, do the players. It is finally inward that "The Burning Glass" turns, scorching the fine furniture, the fine souls and sentiments, until there is nothing left but smoke and rubble. (*At the Longacre.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

MERRY-GO-ROUND

THE two recent films which are bound to rate attention in future cinema histories are both mediocre as movies. "The Moon Is Blue," which bucked the Production Code, is a rather trivial comedy in which the youthful heroine uses words unusual for the sound tracks; and "La Ronde," which won a censorship battle by a Supreme Court decision, is an overly cute and tiresome illustrated lecture on the sexual behavior of various immoral human males and females.

Based as it is on the play by Arthur Schnitzler about a group of people in old Vienna, "La Ronde" doesn't call its characters immoral; it merely presents them in their rendezvous, or rather I should say a master of ceremonies (played by Anton Wallbrook with heavy-handed coyness) presents the players in a series of stories which he calls a merry-go-round of love. For 'love,' read 'sex.' Except for various comments by Wallbrook, who always brings the theme back to the merry-go-round motif, the plot is continuous in that one partner of each twosome moves on to the next episode. A street-walker (Simone Signoret) picks up a soldier (Serge Reggiani), who later has an affair with a maid (Simone Simon), who submits quite willingly to her employer's young son (Daniel Gelin), who rents an apartment to win a beautiful lady (Danielle Darrieux), whose pompous husband (Fernand Gravet) lectures her on infidelity while carrying on with a cocotte (Odette Joyeux), who is in love with a poet (Jean-Louis Barrault), whose real interest is an actress (Isa Miranda), who can't resist a handsome guardsman (Gerard Philipe), who later gets drunk and spends the night with the street-walker who started off this long sentence.

Without giving a thought to the loose morals of the people involved, the cynical circle is completed. The large cast responds well to Max Ophuls' direction; and the Oscar Strauss music is appropriate to the Viennese backgrounds and the gaily irresponsible theme; but it never seemed to dawn on the makers of this film how tiresome this one-note theme would get or how unreal they made these situations by not showing any aftermaths. The master of ceremonies, acting like a one-man Greek chorus as well as the engineer on this "merry-go-round of love," explains his presence by saying, "I am you." My answer to him is, "Not me, kid—not in this set-up."

PROBABLY Miss Henry Handel Richardson, who wrote that fine novel about musicians called *Maurice Guest,* would be surprised to find her story turned into a soap opera. She'd be doubly surprised because of the capable writers who did the adaptation (Ruth and Augustus Goetz) and the screenplay (Fay and Michael Kanin). But what might please the famous Australian novelist about "Rhapsody" (the new name for *Maurice Guest*) is the music itself. Seldom does a film about musicians do its serious music so well and make it an integral part of the story. Furthermore, the dubbing is excellent. When Vittorio Gassman, as a violinist studying in Zurich, goes to work on Tschaikovsky's *Concerto in D Major for Violin and Orchestra,* it actually seems as if the fine music we hear is coming from Gassman's violin. Michael Rabin did the off-stage playing. And when John Ericson sits at the piano to give us Rachmaninoff's *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor for Piano and Orchestra,* the beautiful playing of Claudio Arrau really seems to be Ericson's. Throughout the entire picture, which is generous with musical numbers, the musical and orchestral direction of Johnny Green is outstanding.

The trouble with "Rhapsody" lies in its script and frequently third-rate dialogue. Elizabeth Taylor, looking so beautiful in the lead role that one overlooks her acting inadequacies, portrays the pampered and self-centered daughter of a rich man (Louis Calhern). She tags along with Gassman, her current love, to Zurich and then refuses to share him with his violin. When he moves on to bigger and better concerts, she marries a young American pianist (Ericson) and lets him go to seed as a rich girl's drunken husband until

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she decides to make a great pianist out of him—just so she can win back Gassman. This absurd froth has been handsomely photographed in Technicolor, and Director Charles Vidor gets convincing performances out of the men.

CONDITIONED reflexes and a few ideas from Freud have been added to the movie version of "Phantom of the Rue Morgue," a 3-D chiller-diller which stems vaguely from the Poe tale with a similar name. The movie is so packed with thrills and moments of horror are so accentuated by Director Roy Del Ruth's use of the third dimension that there is no inclination to think about the soundness of either the psychology or the plot. Karl Malden, Claude Dauphin, Patricia Medina, Steve Forest and many others are involved in these weird goings-on in turn-of-the-century Paris.

YOUNG and old fans should not miss "Yesterday and Today," a documentary film about the movies that runs a little longer than an hour. Besides showing some of the first newsreels as well as early Melies comedies, Pathe films, John Bunny in action and various other fascinating bits, the documentary has many shots of stars of the twenties which should make the oldsters sigh with nostalgia and the youngsters sit up and take notice. George Jessel, who wrote and reads the narration, isn't always accurate on his dates but his wisecracks are amusing.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE PROPHET ARMED"

Washington, D.C.

TO the Editors: Michael Harrington's interesting review [March 5] of Isaac Deutscher's life of Trotsky, *The Prophet Armed,* seems founded on certain premises that are highly dubious.

These assumptions are first that the Russian Revolution would have turned out differently if the culturally more advanced German Socialists had made a successful revolution of their own, secondly that the Russian Revolution turned into a totalitarian nightmare because it came prematurely, or at least at an unfortunate moment in history, and thirdly that Trotsky was by moral standards preferable to Stalin.

I think all of these assumptions are sentimental, romantic, and unconvincing. Once Kerensky failed and the revolution fell under the control of Lenin, Trotsky, and the other Bolsheviks, nothing good could have come out of it: it was doomed to bloodshed and nightmare. Harrington makes a valid and important point

MORE MURDER in a NUNNERY

by Eric Shepherd

As readers of "Murder in a Nunnery" will remember, Mr. Shepherd has an almost uncanny understanding of the atmosphere and routine of a convent boarding school. When he casts a corpse into the midst of one, he knows exactly how everyone will react—who will be calm (not the police), who will be cross (the gardener), who will solve the problem (Reverend Mother?). It's all very delightful, and if you lose the thread of the plot, it will only be as a result of laughing so much. $2.50

ANIMALS UNDER THE RAINBOW

by Msgr. Aloysius Roche

Stories of saints and animals who made friends, delightfully told, and illustrated with 20 wood engravings by Agnes Miller Parker, which cause a grownup to covet the book as much as children. Ages 7-12. $2.75

There is now a

POCKET EDITION

of the Knox New Testament

The format is pleasing, the type clear, but the price is the point of course: $1.50 in paper binding, $1.50 in leatherette, $2.00 in cloth.
There is also a pocket size Presentation Edition, in black leather with gold stamping and edges and ribbon marker, at $6.00.

Order from any bookstore

The current number of Sheed & Ward's OWN TRUMPET contains our whole Spring list, new and reprinted book reviews, extracts from books and Charlot's illustrations. To get the Trumpet, free and postpaid, write to Lucy MacGill,

SHEED & WARD **New York 3**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when he says some men in history are wrong for the right reasons, but this does not apply to Trotsky. He was wrong for the wrong reasons. He believed in sweeping whole classes and groups into "the dustbin of history." He believed in the dictatorship of an elite acting on behalf of a single class. Nothing but moral decay could come from such theories, for absolute power always corrupts absolutely.

There was "a profound humanitarianism" and "a genuine moral quality" inherent in the Revolution but it belonged to the oppressed Russian people seeking freedom from Czarist tyranny. The "genuine tragedy" occurred when this movement toward freedom was captured by the Bolsheviks.

A revolution in Germany would not have saved Russia. Germany in 1918 had no fully developed middle class and no sturdy tradition of political freedom, and these are the only possible sources of those checks necessary to prevent a society in transition to socialism from collapsing into tyranny. When Germany did finally have a social upheaval it produced the equally ghastly Nazi totalitarianism of 1933. (The truth probably is that, contrary to Engels, the time is never ripe for a "good" revolution because socially advanced countries don't need one. In the twentieth century, social revolutions have occurred only in backward countries like Russia and China.)

Trotsky was an intellectual and a charming man and therefore to Westerners is a more attractive figure than Stalin, but if the dictatorship the Bolsheviks set up in 1917 was to survive and carry out its program, its leader would have had to do what Stalin did. It is hard to believe that Trotsky's victory would have altered subsequent events greatly. To take just one example, it must be remembered that Trotsky defended the attack on Finland in 1939 as necessary to protect the homeland of the Revolution.

Trotsky personally may have been a hero in the Elizabethan sense but it is an error to suggest that he had any fundamental kinship with, or was a figure operating within, the Western tradition of humanitarianism and freedom.

WILLIAM V. SHANNON.

REMAILING SERVICE

At Kenrick Seminary (7800 Kenrick Road, St. Louis 19, Mo.) there is a file of some twenty-five hundred missionaries in English-reading foreign countries. The Kenrick Remailing Service, at that address, offers to supply readers of The Commonweal with the name and address of a missionary who would welcome back issues of the magazine. Copies regularly remailed by subscribers would be for the missionary himself and for distribution to people interested in Catholicism. For details, address the Kenrick Remailing Service.

FROM ENGLAND

Dylan Thomas: Everybody's Adonais

SAM HYNES

London

THE literary news in London is still the death of Dylan Thomas. Everyone agrees that Thomas had a great many friends, but I think even he would be surprised at the number of his public mourners. The local press gave his death wide and sympathetic notice —even the *Daily Mirror,* which one would not ordinarily place in the avant garde, published a genuinely moving tribute. Since his death there have been: two performances of his radio play, "Under Milk Wood," and a discussion of his work on the Third Program; at least two public readings of his poems, one to a packed house at Festival Hall which wound up with Peggy Ashcroft reading "Lycidas"; and two readings of "Under Milk Wood" at the Old Vic which sold out weeks in advance. The published version of the play, which appeared early this month, was in its second impression a week before publication, and the publishers were confident of a ten thousand sale in the first week. This is a figure a great many good novels don't reach here, and such a sale for a radio play is fairly incredible.

The little magazines and reviews have, as one might expect, taken Thomas' death to heart, and have published quantities of memoirs, elegies, tributes, etc. These range from the touching to the embarrassing, from valuable biographical notes about Thomas to tiresome biographical notes about the mourners. The worst are hyperbolical and hysterical: "Something like a panic descends on the world of letters," "I feel as if a great principle were in graver danger of extinction now that he is dead." One expects hyperbole at wakes, of course, but it is unfortunate that Thomas' reputation should have such nonsense to live down.

The most valuable materials to come out of all this are the recollections of Welsh friends of Thomas' youth —of Daniel Jones in *Encounter* and of a number of others in the memorial issue of *Adam* (the latter has a lot of first-rate material, and no future biographer of Thomas can afford to overlook it). To see Thomas in grammar school, or in a bookshop in Swansea, to read his schoolboy poems, is to add to one's knowledge of his poetic materials, for Thomas, more than most poets, made his art out of his own past. On the other hand,

Mr. Hynes is an American critic, now in England, who has been teaching at Swarthmore.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thomas would be amused, I think, at the quantity of bad verse that his death has inspired. I counted seven elegies in a casual survey of a few magazines.

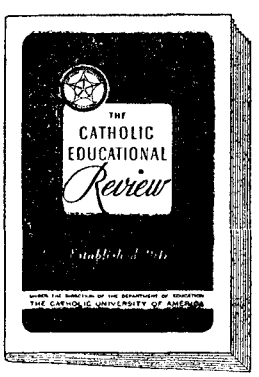
ONE wonders at the volume of the weeping. It is clearly not simply a matter of lost genius—Yeats wrote as well, and died more quietly. One might argue that Thomas was better known, both in England and in America, than any of his fellow poets. He reached his countrymen through his readings of poetry on the BBC—for many of them his voice was the voice of poetry. Roy Campbell recalls that in the early days of the Third Program "it was Dylan's voice that took off from the ground—and flew the whole program when it was still an experiment." He was also known, though more in America than here, for his readings and talks on college campuses (*Encounter* has an interesting transcript of such a meeting at the University of Utah). And finally there were the pubs; if one is to judge from the published recollections, Thomas must have been known to most of the steady drinkers in England.

But a poet can be well known, and yet not mourned. There was something unique in Thomas' relation to his public. He was, when he died, a symbolic figure—as much the national poet of England as anyone could be (and this is quite an achievement for a Welshman). He embodied the popular notion of what a poet should be (not intentionally, of course, but simply because that's the way he was). He was individualistic and eccentric, he loved life and women and beer, and his devotion to his "craft and sullen art" was manifest and complete. He was the only poet of our time who lived up to his poetry. Thomas stood for something apart from and untouched by politics and economics and even war (except as war created individual tragedies to which he responded as a poet). And it was that separation from our daily anxieties which gave his death a mythical quality—he was the sacrifice offered up by the best side of us (for we really *do* love poetry, if only we weren't so worried, so anxious) to the worst of the world.

THIS mythical quality is unfortunate; it gets in the way of the poetry. Stories about Thomas are becoming better known than his poems, and the new ones of his death have enough mystery in them (at least in the reports circulated here) to lend themselves to further mythical development. Furthermore, the anxiety of everyone who ever drank in a pub with Thomas to put that fact on record is filling his history so full of binges that it's hard to fit the work in, and this in turn distorts the true picture of Thomas as a careful and dedicated craftsman. I take it as a law of letters that you can't have a fabulous artist and his undistorted art at the same time—you must sacrifice one or the other. I think most of us would gladly trade all the "I knew Dylan" yarns for a single line of his poetry.

IT is also unfortunate that to the present adulation there must be an inevitable reaction. The common reader, the man who likes his poetry straight, is likely to feel that all this breast-beating smacks too much of the coterie—the in-group parading its grief for the benefit of the out-group. The second issue of John Lehmann's new *London Magazine* contains a rather truculent letter on this subject, and I suspect that the writer speaks for a number of people who are made uncomfortable by idolatry.

In the end, of course, the wailing will fade away, and the work will remain. Byron survived a similar treatment (remember Tennyson, rushing into the woods to carve on a stone, "Byron is dead"?), and Thomas has as good a chance. Fortunately, "Under Milk Wood" has just been published here, and a prose collection, *Early One Morning,* is to follow. These should help to divert attention back from the dead poet to the living work, where it belongs—to the miraculous, wonderful words that will remain of Dylan Thomas, when all the sound and fury of his passing is forgotten.



Catholic Parents!

—as well as Teachers and Clergy—you should be receiving

The Catholic Educational Review

Edited under the direction of
THE
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA
Department of Education
(MONTHLY—SEPT. TO JUNE)

Educational Problems, Projects, Techniques—Abstracts—News from the educational field—Notes—Book Reviews—Covers the Elementary, High School, and College Levels.

Some Recent Contents:

*Developing a Reading Vocabulary . . . Sr. Mary Brian, O.P.
*Historical Reason for Inception of Parochial School System . . . Sr. M. Carolyn Klinkhamer, O.P.
*The Role of Habit in the Process of Study . . . Sr. Mary Aquinas, S.C.I.
*Molding Youth in Sanctity and Sanity . . . Sr. Mary Amatora, O.S.F.

SUBSCRIPTION—$4.00 per year
THE CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL REVIEW
The Catholic University of America
Washington 17, D. C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Prophet Not Without Honor In His Own Country

SCENES AND PORTRAITS: Memories of Childhood and Youth. By Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. $4.50.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

VAN Wyck Brooks is a writer whom I have more than once misunderstood. *The Opinions of Oliver Allston* shocked me by its rather chauvinistic attacks on such gods of my generation as Eliot and Joyce; I did not grasp that these attacks were partly motivated by something Mr. Brooks and I had in common—call it liberalism or Fabian socialism. Then again, not knowing enough about his background, I failed to realize that the imaginary Oliver Allston served as a mask for but one side of Mr. Brooks' personality; the whole man would surely never be able to lay his hand on his heart and swear that he believed Joyce and Eliot were nothing more than "coterie writers."

Furthermore—and here I erred in good company—I long failed to realize that the five volumes of *Makers and Finders* were intended to form less a literary history of America than a history of the literary *life* here—its economics, its politics, its intellectual climate, its clubs and coteries, its apprentices and journeymen and master craftsmen. My belated appreciation of the work's purpose still cannot make me swallow its garrulous, allusive style, which reappears in the second, third and fourth chapters of *Scenes and Portraits*—those in which Mr. Brooks links himself, his ancestors and his birthplace (Plainfield, New Jersey) to the American cultural tradition that he has explored so thoroughly. Chapter IV, "My Forbears," maddeningly refuses to mention surnames; I suggest that Mr. Brooks append a family tree to the next volume if he continues his autobiography, as I hope he will.

I trust I have not misunderstood Mr. Brooks once again when I say that *Scenes and Portraits* is the story of a conversion—the experience of one who began his career as an interpreter of European culture, only to find himself at twenty-eight, on the eve of the first world war, becoming the interpreter and the prophet of a new American culture.

Except for a year in Germany, Austria and Italy at thirteen which gave him a precocious knowledge of art history, Mr. Brooks grew up in the privileged, formal, piously Episcopalian, yet light-hearted suburban America which George Orwell once called "The World of *Helen's Babies,*" noting that ". . . in the more populous eastern states a society similar to Jane Austen's seems to have survived longer than it did in England." From this sheltered society, so unaware of its privileged nature and its impermanence (though the culture and decency of such "Wall Street suburbs"—as Mr. Brooks calls them—still survive in a few favored enclaves), Brooks traveled a devious route to Twenty-third Street and friendship with the "Ash-can School" of painters. The road led through the Harvard of 1904-1907—also privileged and unaware, steeped in the Europe of the Middle Ages—to journalism in London and a first book—about America, symptomatically—entitled *The Wine of the Puritans.* Then came the period of relative poverty and hack-work in New York that proved so formative, thanks to the Irish painter John Butler Yeats, father of the poet, who held court at Petitpas' Restaurant on West Twenty-ninth, teaching a wisdom akin to Albert Schweitzer's "reverence for life." Furthermore, Yeats' talk of the Irish Renaissance inspired in Brooks the hope for a corresponding movement in America.

Two years of teaching English at Stanford University and another in England with the Workers' Educational Association were to intervene before the final "Turning Homeward" that gives its name to the last chapter. In 1914 the disintegration of the Europe he had worshipped sent Brooks home for virtually the next thirty-five years, but already the writing of *America's Coming-of-Age* had symbolized a turning homeward in a deeper sense, the realization that "I had grown up in a crowded little corner of the country, with windows opening towards Europe and closed towards the West."

Scenes and Portraits, though not quite as short or as selective as Logan Pearsall Smith's *Unforgotten Years,* reminds me a good deal of the latter book; the background of both writers is similar, though the twenty years' difference between their ages probably explains the very different endings of their stories; Smith, the older New Jersey writer, became a convert to England and the eighteenth century, Brooks to America and the twentieth. Brooks has the more interesting story to tell and, while I wouldn't put his style on a par with Smith's, he is decidedly the greater man. Like Smith, Brooks does not profess to tell all; he merely gives us those segments of his experience that were of significance for his conversion. All in all, this book has given me more pleasure than any other of Brooks' that I have read except *The Ordeal of Mark Twain.*

Loss of China

THE CHINA TANGLE. By Herbert Feis. Princeton University Press. $6.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

THE loss of China to the Communists haunts our political life as though a crazed Cato were monotonously intoning "America has been defeated." But it may be argued that while the Communists did gain China, strictly speaking China was not ours to lose. This conclusion, suggested by Herbert Feis's book, is neither Pollyannish nor even a source of comfort to the Democrats. The Communist victory in China meant a decline in our position, a grimly serious American reverse. But we could not lose what we did not have.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GO TO EUROPE

1 SUMMER BICYCLE TOUR
Visit Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, Switzerland, France, England. Dr. Clement H. de Haas, tour conductor. Price covers round trip on boat, bicycle, room and board. Limit: 25 applicants. Time: 8 wks. **$690**
Deadline: April 24.

2 SUMMER SEMINAR TOUR
Special for students of Pol. Science, History, Geography, Art, Arch. and Liberal Arts. Seminars and lectures in famous Univ. in Holland, Germany, Italy and Austria. Salzburg Music Festival. 95 days. Price covers round trip on boat, room and board, tuition. Deadline: April 24. **$895**

3 TWO SEMESTER PROGRAM
Live in Vienna, Austria, study English taught courses offered by U. of Vienna. Student groups visit 9 countries of Europe and North Africa. Price covers round trip on boat, room and board, and tuition. Deadline: June 1. **$1390**

For free brochure and applications, write to:
THE INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN STUDIES
7325 South Maryland Avenue
Chicago 19, Illinois

CATHOLIC EXECUTIVES NEEDED

High-calibre, executive-type men needed for permanent, salaried employment with established nationwide church-counseling, fund-raising firm. Necessary travel requiring four moves annually liberally compensated. Responsible single men, married men without children ideally suited. Dignified sales, public relations, group leadership background most desirable. Necessary, too, are good manners, appearance, intelligence, impeccable character plus the inclination to get so absorbed in your job that you forget the long hours.

We would like your picture, resume of experience and education, personal situation, references. We will hold this fully confidential and will reply with full description of our company and work. Then, if we are mutually interested, we will arrange an interview. The men we want are likely employed now but would like an opportunity for more challenging work, broader experience, and opportunity to advance into five-figure salary bracket. Box 212, The Commonweal.

A CATHOLIC BOOK SERVICE

A thorough search service on out-of-print books, any subject or language. Diligent, personal attention. No obligation to purchase. Complete want lists invited.

All new and current titles supplied, postpaid, at published prices.

C. F. PETELLE
Box 289 Maywood Illinois

BISHOPS' FUND

COLLECTION

for

War Victims

LAETARE SUNDAY

MARCH 28

In the story of Communist victory and American defeat five elements are important: conditions in China, and Japanese, Russian, British and American policies. *The China Tangle* is an account of "the American effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall mission." Mr. Feis apparently had unrestricted access to all the files of the State Department and to a considerable amount of military information. His work, then, deals with American policy, one of the five major elements, albeit one from which a fairly coherent story may be told.

The most important element in the tragedy was China, once unified by a culture and bureaucracy, but in 1941 tenuously held together by a nationalist hope, a straggling and dispirited military force and an inexpert bureaucracy strikingly lacking in highmindedness. Revolution and republican nationalism had failed to halt the political disintegration of a sprawling land, which further suffered the agony of Civil War and foreign invasion.

Chiang Kai-shek, refusing to submit to the Japanese, found strength in his hope of eventual American aid. When the United States became engaged in the Pacific War as a result of its refusal "to let China fend for itself," Chiang hopefully thought that China would become a major theater of war. The hope was born only to be blighted.

General Stilwell's burden may stand as a symbol of the Chinese American relationship. He was assigned to serve with Chiang and to join the Chinese and American war efforts. General Marshall, who did not believe that the China theater offered important opportunities for action, concluded his discussion of the immediate mission of saving Burma by telling Stilwell: "By the time you get there you may be in command in Australia." American assistance misfired from the beginning. Stilwell came bringing few resources to China, and a conscience loan of one-half billion dollars was dissipated without strengthening Chinese war potential or without stopping China's inflation.

Chiang mistrusted the British as imperialists and Prime Minister

GENERAL EDUCATION and THE LIBERAL COLLEGE

By

William F. Cunningham, O.S.C., Ph.D.

Father Cunningham, drawing on his vast reserve of experience in the field of education, turns the spotlight on the shortcomings in our present-day system of education and suggests definite and sometimes startling methods for its improvement. His ideas and suggestions are based on sound principles and can be readily applied to the problems that face today's educators. $4.00

What experts say about the book:

"The best book in the field."—Bonaventure Schwinn, O.S.B., *Editor,* "American Benedictine Review"

"New and original."—Samuel K. Wilson, S.J., *Past President,* University of Loyola, Chicago, Admissions Office, University of Detroit

A Fresh Presentation of the Ancient Problems of Metaphysics

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEING

By

Rt. Rev. Louis de Raeymaeker, Ph.D.

Translated by

Edmund H. Ziegelmeyer, S.J.

Here is a philosophy of reality which demonstrates how we come into living contact with being, and how we can ascend from our own ego to Absolute Being, the ultimate explanation of all that is.

The author, Louis de Raeymaeker, president of the Institut Superieur de Philosophie at the University of Louvain, adheres to the principles of the synthesis of St. Thomas Aquinas, especially when application is made of the doctrines of analogy and the real distinction between created essence and existence.

Here, indeed, is a dramatic demonstration that the ultimate explanation of the contingent can be discovered only in Absolute Being, from which all else derives. A fresh, lucid approach by the author and an exact and interesting translation by Edmund H. Ziegelmeyer, S.J., make the book an excellent guide for teachers and students who wish a panoramic view of Thomistic metaphysics. $4.95

Thomistic Teachings Simplified

REALITY

By **Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.**

Translated by

Patrick Cummins

Only the masterful Father Lagrange could have so succinctly condensed the whole of modern Thomistic thought into a single philosophical-theological synthesis. After a lifetime devoted to the study of St. Thomas and his commentators the eminent Dominican theologian has in *Reality,* highlighted in systematic and integrated order the chief doctrines of Thomistic thought. The book is written with a simplicity that makes you marvel as you read it. It is an effortless reduction of Saint Thomas' teachings to the essentials. $6.00

At your Bookseller, or from

B. HERDER BOOK CO.
PUBLISHERS
15 & 17 S. Broadway St. Louis 2, Mo.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Churchill thought of the Chinese area as a decidedly secondary theater. The British leader could not understand the American habit of talking about China as a major power and of forecasting that false vision into plans for the postwar world. It is, however, instructive to note that the benevolent error of our diplomatic talk did not provide the blueprint of our military practice.

It was soon evident that in attacking the United States, Japan had gambled and failed. The riddle of the future, then, was who would be the paramount power in East Asia, if Japan were destroyed. Although Chiang's China was a candidate, many American officials in China doubted the capacity of his government to qualify. Vice-President Wallace was no isolated radical voice in writing (July 10, 1944): "The Chinese Nationalist leader . . . should be considered only as a 'short term investment,' neither intelligent enough nor politically strong enough for postwar China." This line of thought has been mostly bitterly controverted since the Communist victory. Was this judgment based on an honest appraisal, which was confirmed in its prophecy of a new leader, or did it involve a partisan slanting of reports which eventually helped to make what was initially a misrepresentation a historical actuality? At any rate, if Chiang's government was ruled out, there were three other possible candidates, the United States, Russia and some other force within China.

The military withdrawal of the United States after the war involved a withdrawal of American candidacy. Meanwhile, a painfully comic scene had taken place. The unreluctant Soviet Union was cajoled into the war against Japan. This made Russia a formidable candidate for predominance. It also inevitably raised the question of the likelihood and consequences of Russian and Chinese-Communist cooperation.

The American answer to this prospect was to promote the reconciliation and cooperation of the government of Chiang and the Chinese Communists. Such was the aim of Ambassador Hurley and of General Marshall. The concessions made at Yalta were also meant to gain Soviet benevolence for China and for this policy. Feis believes that the faults of the Asian parts of the Yalta Agreement were that it confirmed the earlier determination to reduce Japan to a dependent power and that the Agreement did not give conclusive form to its very justification—securing Soviet cooperation with Chiang's government. Along with that, Feis laments American failure adequately to arm the Chinese government. "This much is clear: that if at the time of the Japanese surrender, the government armies had been in better shape, the Yalta Accord might have worked as Roosevelt thought it would."

China's early call for help came when our resources were urgently needed elsewhere. Our government believed that it was merely deferring the dispatch of greater aid. "And then the unexpected happened: the war in the Pacific ended abruptly before our effort in behalf of China reached its planned fullness." Perhaps the key to our failure may be

BISHOPS' FUND FOR VICTIMS OF WAR

Your continued generosity will mean that during 1954 help can be brought to:

- 4,000,000 homeless South Koreans; plus 1,000,000 who can never return to the Communist North;
- 4,500,000 refugees from Red China in Hong Kong and Formosa;
- uncounted victims of the 'hot war' in Vietnam;
- 2,500,000 Escapees from East Europe, crowded into West Germany with 8,000,000 remaining Expellees;
- Italy's so-called 'surplus' millions;
- the near-million Arabs still homeless in the Near East!

BISHOPS' FUND COLLECTION
Laetare Sunday, March 28

FOR THESE MILLIONS whose very lives depend on the measure of help *each of us* can procure for them.

NEW CATALOG
ready showing all
regular items; send 25¢
Berliner & McGinnis
Nevada City, California

In Next Week's Issue

Third Report on The Commonweal's

30th Anniversary Subscription Campaign

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schools

DELAWARE

ARCHMERE ACADEMY

Accredited boy's preparatory school under Norbertine Canons. High school only. Resident and day students. Small classes, limited enrollment. Complete sports program, well equipped gymnasium and athletic fields. Magnificent main building set in spacious 48-acre campus overlooking the Delaware River. Public speaking, orchestral and choral groups, social activities. Moral and spiritual guidance. Located at Claymont, Delaware, 21 miles south of Philadelphia. Write for catalog. Very Reverend Headmaster, Box 67-H, Claymont, Del.

RHODE ISLAND

PORTSMOUTH PRIORY SCHOOL

Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 23 miles from Providence, 8 miles from Newport, on inland waters of Narragansett Bay. Conducted by American Monks of the English Benedictine Congregation, assisted by Lay Masters. Five forms, 8th grade and four years of high school. Standard Preparatory Course for all colleges and technical schools. Added opportunities in Mathematics and Languages. College Board Examination. Full facilities for athletics including sailing. Address the Secretary.

Classified

★ Rate for your message, 12½c a word. Eight words per $1. Twelve words minimum. Centered lines 85c each. Discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.

IRISH BOOKS AND GIFTS

★ Books, Linens, Gifts. *Catalogs.*
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, Inc.
870 Lexington Ave. (near 65th), New York

CATHOLIC BOOKS

★ Original designs for crucifixes and statues by modern artists. Exceptional stock of Catholic books, cards. Catalog on request.
THE GUILD BOOK SHOP
117 E. 57th St., N.Y. 22, N.Y. PLaza 3-0225

CHESTERTON AND BELLOC

★ Chesterton and Belloc Books
200 titles. Free Catalogue.
Prosser, 2937 North Racine Ave.
Chicago 13, Illinois

FRUITS

★ LIVE LONGER, feel better, eating Riolem juiceful, uncolored, ORANGES, GRAPEFRUIT. $2.50 bushel. RIOLEM-COM, Palatka, Florida.

APARTMENT WANTED—NEW YORK

★ Family of 3 adults and 5 yr. old girl need 4 or 5 room apt. near church and transportation, Queens or Nassau, up to $90, April 15th occupancy. Tel. FLushing 8-4629.

found in official disregard of George Kennan's warning (April 23, 1945): "It would be tragic if our natural anxiety for the support of the Soviet Union at this juncture, coupled with Stalin's use of words which mean all things to all people and his cautious affability, were to lead us into an undue reliance on Soviet aid or even Soviet acquiescence in the achievement of our long-term objectives in China."

The China Tangle, though written too closely from notes to have an absorbing narrative quality, is an important contribution to scholarship and to our political life. It certainly rises to the dignity of the author's purpose, to "reconcile us in the task ahead of redeeming our purposes in China."

Private Worlds

CARNIVAL BY THE SEA. By Sigrid de Lima. Scribners. $3.50.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

MISS De Lima has given us another locale as companion to Carson McCullers' "lonely hill," another set of perceptive, sensitive, exotic people who, like Truman Capote characters, "rebel against the light," and a story full of all the Saroyan elements of torn hearts and half-madness and dream-like, bitter-sweet human kindness. Such a conglomeration of all these things is this novel that it is hard to understand why it seems to be so original, so much a thing in itself. It must be true that though the paths of literary self-searching and introversion are parallel and similar, the country they go through, with each writer, differs very considerably, and so *Carnival by the Sea* is an old excursion into a new and acutely agonized private world.

There are winter ghost towns along the coast of Southern California, towns that die in winter. The grotesque shapes of their orange juice stands, their monster houses shaped like coffee pots, their garish carnivals and boarded side-show-booths, "the gaunt bones of the loop-the-loop," and the ghostly, echoing

Colleges

NEW YORK

NAZARETH COLLEGE

Rochester 18, N. Y. Conducted by Sisters of St. Joseph. B.A. and B.S. Degrees. Liberal Arts—Science—Education—Art—Music—Speech and Dramatics—Secretarial Science—Social Service—Nursing—Medical Technology.

NEW JERSEY

GEORGIAN COURT COLLEGE

Four-year course leading to B.A. and B.S. degrees provides a solid background of general culture and special training in one particular field. Well-integrated program in Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, Science, Music, Home Economics, Business Administration. Teacher Training. Fully accredited. Address Secretary, Lakewood, New Jersey.

MARYLAND

COLLEGE OF NOTRE DAME OF MARYLAND

North Charles St., Baltimore 10, Maryland. A fully accredited Catholic College for Women, conducted by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Courses leading to B.A. degree, with concentration in Art, Languages, Literature, Sciences, Music, Social Studies, Speech, Mathematics, Philosophy and Theology. Workshops in Creative Writing. Education courses leading to teacher certification. Pre-medical and laboratory technical training. Full Physical Education program, including Swimming. Address the Registrar.

KANSAS

ST. BENEDICT'S COLLEGE

Atchison, Kansas. A Catholic College for men conducted by the Benedictine Fathers. A Liberal Arts College, accredited by the North Central Association. Located fifty miles north-west of Kansas City, Missouri, on the Missouri River. Address Registrar for information.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Week by Week

—The Commonweal publishes timely feature articles both on specific political problems and on the ideological conflicts and currents of our times.

—Foreign dispatches direct from Europe and the Middle East.

—John C. Cort's knowledgeable comment on labor affairs.

—Editorials on the headline news of the week.

—Philip T. Hartung's coverage of all the important new films.

—Theater criticism by Richard Hayes.

—Illuminating and respected reviews of current books.

Current contributors include Christopher Dawson, Marshall McLuhan, Gerald Vann, Donat O'Donnell, Francois Mauriac, H. A. Reinhold.

Special introductory offer for new subscribers only

----------17 Weeks for $2----------

THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. Enclosed is $2. Please send The Commonweal for the next seventeen weeks to:

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY.....

3-26-54

boardwalk along a frigid ocean, these are all landmarks of summer gaiety now boarded up and padlocked. It is into this symbolic city that alcoholic Ed Miller and his mad sister Dissy come. It is here (in the converted Coffee Pot) that his cruel and crazed stepmother is living out her sick and frighted life. A daffy, clownish, kindly native, Mart Noman, haunts the shore, seeing the ocean as alive and female. And there are the less colorful residents—the hotel-keeper, the stepmother's maid, the bus-driver—all intensely acute, ordinary, kindly persons, upon whom the lost ones lean, and to whom they turn.

But beyond the nightmare town and the troubled people this is a story of monstrous cruelty. Jessica Albany, mother of Dissy and stepmother to David and to Maidie, destroys one child, corrupts another and maddens the third out of deep-seated self-love and passionate vanity. Her neurotic narcissism is heightened by her husband's rejection of her, and it corrodes into a cruelty towards her children that borders on the fantastic. Finally her own mind cracks under its burden, and she is left alone and invalided, surrounded by the furniture of her old life in her fantastic percolator of a house. By chance, David, now named Ed Miller out of rejection of his old identity, finds her here, and here also comes Dissy from her asylum, returned from the furthest reaches of insanity to help her mother's sick old age. The poignancy of Dissy's return, the tragedy of David's inability to seek his revenge for his ruined soul, and the valedictory that Mrs. Albany finally accomplishes, these are the last notes sounded in this chilling pathological piece.

Some derivation in a young novelist is inevitable. Miss DeLima's is evident but not important, because her talent is strong enough to use what it must and impress the whole with an originality and force of its own. She has taken what Freud has called the *Familienroman* of the neurotic, organized it on her own special terms, placed it in the singular, nightmarish atmosphere of a cold California sun, and made a really good story of it all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Those "Dark" Ages

EUROPEAN LITERATURE AND THE LATIN MIDDLE AGES. By Ernst Robert Curtius. Translated from the German by Willard R. Trask. Pantheon. $5.50.

By MAX FISCHER

WHEN we celebrated Goethe's bicentenary in Aspen in 1949, Ernst Robert Curtius, Professor of Romance Languages at Bonn and author of this book, left his audience spellbound by the audacity with which he stressed the unity of Occidental literary tradition and revised many popular conceptions on medieval literature. Coming from a country terribly destroyed by the war, he stressed to his American audience the Occident's imperishable treasures of poetic beauty and religious faith as the reservoir of spiritual energies by which Western man should flavor and ennoble his present-day life.

In his research, especially into French literature, Curtius always emphasized poetic values, and would introduce to his German students and readers works of the alleged *"erbfeind"* (heriditary enemy) which had European range and value. His interest in poetry did not stop with Romance literature. He translated T. S. Eliot's "Wasteland," published a study on James Joyce, wrote essays on Stefan George, Hofmannsthal, and Toynbee, and warned again and again against the beginning barbarization of German education. Just a few months before Hitler took over, he published a courageous pamphlet "German Mind in Danger."

During the thirteen years of Hitlerism, the anti-totalitarian professor turned away from the problems of the day. He had always admired both Virgil and Dante, and now he decided to devote himself to the study of the thirteen centuries of Latin literature which lie between the two poets. With this he really filled a gap in the history of literature. Though Latin was the common language of the European intelligentsia in the Middle Ages, we have many more standard works on the vernacular literatures of France, Germany, England, Italy and Spain than on the great Latin literature. Curtius' book (here supplemented and very carefully rendered into English) was an international sensation among scholars when it appeared in German in 1947. But as a work which had grown out of the vitality of an enthusiast, and under the pressures of a specific historical situation, it attracted much more than scholarly interest. It is one of the rare books on literature that give the reader true enjoyment and point out to him hitherto neglected sources of beauty and truth. In spite of the many philological details offered by the author, one is not lost in a maze, since Herr Curtius always has the great Occidental tradition in mind as the salvation from the errors of our time. This corresponds to the author's postulate: "The historical disciplines will progress wherever specialization and contemplation of the whole are combined and interpenetrate. The two require each other and stand in a complementary relation. Specialization without universalism is blind. Universalism without specialization is inane."

The presentation of the main topic is supplemented by twenty-five excursuses dealing with questions of style and metaphor and continuing some problems into the time of the Spanish counter-reformation and even the French enlightenment. An excellent name and subject index is included in this edition, so the work will prove very useful for reference purposes. But primarily it is to be hoped that this book will awaken a new enthusiasm here too in America for the beauty of a time which some textbooks still call "the dark ages."

REVIEWERS

Vivian Mercier teaches at Columbia University and at the City College of New York.

M. A. Fitzsimons is on the history faculty at Notre Dame.

Doris Grumbach was formerly on the staff of *Time*.

Max Fischer teaches comparative literature and the history of civilization at the New School in New York.

Personal

The only representative of the fair sex in the present lineup of Commonweal editors is easily the busiest of all. Contributing editor Anne Fremantle (wife of Christopher Fremantle, editor of *Gentry*) is the mother of three sons, author of a dozen books, ranging from a biography of George Eliot to *A Guidebook to Sicily*. She has written biographies (Charles de Foucauld, Marmaduke Pikthall), two novels, a book of poems, and contributed to several volumes of literary criticism. Two of her anthologies were published almost simultaneously last fall: *Christian Conversations* and *A Treasury of Early Christianity*. As a translator Mrs. Fremantle turned out *The True Visage of the Saints* (from the German) and Omer Englebert's *The Lives of the Saints* (from the French). During the war she broadcast in both languages for the BBC. She does an occasional broadcast for the Voice of America and has appeared on the television show "Author Meets the Critics."

Mrs. Fremantle, who was educated at Oxford and the London School of Economics, is an associate professor at Fordham in the Department of Communication Arts. At 25, she was Labor Party candidate for St. George's, Westminster, and was defeated by Sir Alfred Duff Cooper, then Minister for War. An interest in politics came naturally. Her father, the late Right Honorable Frederick Huth Jackson, was Privy Councillor, Sheriff of London, and her maternal grandfather, Sir Rounstart Elaphinstone Grant-Duff, was Governor of Madras. In the past few years she has done special UN work.

It is little more than a decade since her conversion to Catholicism but Anne Fremantle is generally recognized as a leading figure in the Catholic literary world, as writer, editor, critic and patron of young hopefuls.

THE EDITORS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wrapped in sleep...wrapped in love

Day's end for tiny legs and arms . . . the bedtime story told, prayers said, the tired little body held for a moment's hug, then tucked into bed . . .

Seal the day now with her good-night kiss and let her drift away into slumber, safe and secure.

Security is the deepest need of our living, and its greatest reward. To provide it for those we love is a privilege possible only in a country like ours.

And this is how we make America secure: by making our own homes so. One secure family circle touching another builds a secure land.

Saving for security is easy!
Read every word—now!

If you've tried to save and failed, chances are it was because you didn't have a *plan*. Well, here's a savings system that really works—the Payroll Savings Plan for investing in Savings Bonds.

This is all you do. Go to your company's pay office, choose the amount you want to save—a couple of dollars a payday, or as much as you wish. That money will be set aside for you before you even draw your pay. And automatically invested in Series "E" U. S. Savings Bonds which are turned over to you.

If you can save only $3.75 a week on the Plan, in 9 years and 8 months you will have $2,137.30. If you can save as much as $18.75 a week, 9 years and 8 months will bring you $10,700!

For your sake, and your family's, too, how about signing up today?

The U. S. Government does not pay for this advertisement. It is donated by this publication in cooperation with the Advertising Council and the Magazine Publishers of America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED